



Aaron Amar Bhamra & Luz Broto

*Handshake*

March 17 – May 18, 2024

Opening: Saturday, March 16, 4:00 – 9:00 PM

During the opening at 6 pm, Luz Broto will present her proposal for the exhibition and discuss the conceptual framework and process with Aaron Amar Bhamra and the Kevin Space team.

In architecture, a door handle serves as an often unnoticed yet significant threshold between the built environment and its inhabitants. Much like a handshake, it establishes a direct and tangible connection, inviting individuals to enter and engage with the space beyond. It becomes a point of interaction, a tactile encounter that transcends mere functionality. As one reaches the handle, there is a shared moment of agency, a reciprocal gesture when the handle becomes an *architectural handshake*, a bridge between the physical structure and the human presence it welcomes. This metaphor of the architectural handshake along with a gesture of hospitality has served as the guiding principle for the artists Aaron Amar Bhamra and Luz Broto in co-conceiving their exhibition *Handshake*. What resonated between the two artists when they met at Kevin Space earlier this year was their shared enthusiasm for exploring and contemplating spatial settings and situations. A space, much like a door handle, can be an architectural construction—a site planned and assembled from various materials such as a wooden floor, a concrete base, a metal/glass door, and a wall built from mortar. However, space transcends its materiality. It is charged with social, political, and phenomenological determinations and everyday immaterial relations and actions.

Aaron Amar Bhamra often procures exhibition spaces that subtly expose their systematics and physical experience by incorporating *imprints* reminiscent of other spaces or past exhibitions. He occasionally uses recurring forms and materials, weaving a site of shifting personal and social archives. For *Handshake* Bhamra developed a new *arrangement* consisting of four chairs, four glasses filled with water, four sheets of music, and one cardboard object, staging a rehearsal for a choir. The absence of the choir members does not detract from the fact that the space remains charged, referring to notions of presence/absence, possibility, and temporality. Luz Broto, driven by her keen interest in non-normative uses of art spaces, situations, social structures, and collective processes, steps onto this conceptual stage, expanding both (1) the gesture of invitation and (2) the concept of rehearsal. Broto shares the gesture of invitation, originally intended for her by Bhamra as an exhibiting artist and as part of the series “Invited by”, and extends this line of invitations—Kevin invites Aaron, Aaron invites Luz, and Luz invites the audience to engage with and utilize the space. Specifically, this means that anyone physically present in the room during the opening event or the regular opening hours can approach the Kevin Space team members, acquire a code, and gain access to the exhibition room. The protocol for the use of the space is established through a handshake. While the rehearsal of the choir in Bhamra’s propositions remains within an original conceptual idea, Broto’s intervention allows a shift in the sense that Bhamra’s arrangement becomes a vibrant actor in Broto’s site-specific intervention and vice versa—bringing to mind again the guiding principle of the *Handshake*, reciprocity and interaction. A choir may come and rehearse.

*Handshake* transcends its gaze and function beyond normative and institutionalized understandings of usage, hospitality, and access, offering an inclusive rather than a representational space open to everyone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The artists aim to capture and convey the unspoken language of connection through the elements of the exhibition, inviting guests to freely occupy and activate the open space as they wish. This creates an interplay

between the space's components and the viewers during each encounter. Furthermore, it may lead to interactions between different visitors who may enter the room simultaneously without knowing each other. With *Handshake*, Bhamra and Broto challenge the established notions and paradigms of spatial exhibition setting and the dynamics of invitation and accessibility within an art space, questioning the conditions and *exclusions* legitimized by diverse rules and regulations. Who will feel addressed by such an open invitation? Who truly has a use for this kind of space? And who constitutes the 'everyone' it is open to.

Through spatial and architectural small-scale interventions, such as dismantling the indoor handles, changing the lock cylinder, blocking the storage, and exposing the almost absence of objects, both artists carve out a realm for social interactions, delving into the fundamental inquiry of public space. Broto, Bhamra, and Kevin Space have equipped the space with essential elements such as light, Wi-Fi, warmth, water, electricity, chairs, glasses, and more, ensuring that each guest can comfortably inhabit the space. Throughout the exhibition, we look for various modes of inhabitation, interpretations, and residues left by visitors, which are then documented at frequent intervals by Bhamra. The artists pose a question: What activities and transformations can occur within the space over the period of two months, with limited control from the Kevin Space team over those who inhabit the space? At the heart of this inquiry lies the crucial matter of trust between the artists, the visitors, and the Kevin Space team. Trust here is not merely an abstract concept, it manifests in the artists' willingness to relinquish some control over the evolution of their proposal. As visitors are invited to navigate this shared space, a symbiotic relationship may emerge, built on openness, and a mutual understanding that transcends traditional boundaries within the realm of art and its engagement with its audience. As a consequence, public time and public space intersperse with the logic of production and consumption of the exhibition space.

¿Can we hold this trust?

Luz Broto (b. 1982, Spain) is a site-specific artist whose artistic practice revolves around a meticulous engagement with each unique space. Working with what's inherent in a space or situation, Broto challenges the established norms, protocols, and uses, sparking subtle yet profound shifts in functionality. Evaluating architectural nuances, urban environments, infrastructure, organizational structures, regulations, and social relations, she enacts minimal interventions that hold transformative power. Her works have been presented among others at Manifesta 14 (Prishtina); Royal Institute of Art (Stockholm); Institute Art Gender Nature HGK (Basel); Maison Des Arts (Brussels); Flora (Bogotá); MACBA (Barcelona); Centro Botín (Santander); CA2M (Madrid); and Secession (Vienna). She is a current resident at Hangar (2022-2024).

Aaron Amar Bhamra (b. 1992, Austria) is an artist whose practice interacts with given conditions, experimenting with the notion of perceiving both distinctions and overlaps simultaneously. He collects fragments in a personal archive of moments embodied in various media such as objects, sound, text, drawing, photography and moving image. By re-enacting the fragments of this archive and placing them in situ, they form a place, an exhibition, an emptiness or a space for conversation. Solo and group exhibitions include, among others: MAUVE (Vienna); SYSTEMA (Marseille); Krinzing Schottenfeld (Vienna); Galerie Le Carceri (Bolzano); Wien Museum MUSA; and PHILEAS Project Space (Vienna). Since 2020, Aaron Amar Bhamra, along with Monika Georgieva, has been running Laurenz Space in Vienna.

#### List of works

Aaron Amar Bhamra

*a choir of four voices*, 2024

various dimensions

print on paper, pencil (1st soprano, 2nd soprano, 1st alto, 2nd alto), four chairs, glasses, water

Aaron Amar Bhamra

*untitled (packaging)*, 2024

74 x 85 cm

cardboard

Luz Broto

*To invite everyone*, 2024

context-specific proposal

Open access to the space 24/7

Luz Broto

*untitled (cylinder)*, 2024

3 x 3 x 2,5 cm

brass

Kunstverein Kevin Space  
Volkertplatz 14/3-4  
AT – 1020 Vienna

Friday 3:00 – 6:00 PM  
Saturday 3:00 – 6:00 PM  
& by appointment

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